

Laurel Sumac

Malosma laurina, Rhus laurina

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau



Photo by John Aimes



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Shape/Size

Large spreading shrub or small tree 15 to 20 feet high and wide.

Leaves

Simple, green, elongated with smooth margins, 3 to 5 inches long.

Flower/Fruit

Showy cream colored flowers occur from the spring to early summer.

Range

Occurs throughout Los Angeles County from coastal zones to the interior foothill areas.

Flammability – Moderate to high.

Maintenance

Laurel sumac, unlike most other natives, can suffer frost damage during cold weather. It should be maintained free of dead material and canopies limbed off the ground. This species can be pruned or trained into attractive multi-trunk shrubs or occasionally, small trees. Laurel Sumac should be removed in areas immediately adjacent to structures unless erosion is a concern. Where continuous stands occur, selective removal is suggested. This deep rooted plant is valuable in protecting against erosion.



Lemonade Berry

Rhus integrifolia

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau

Shape/Size

Large spreading, mounding shrub 6 to 15 feet high and to 25 feet wide.

Leaves

Simple, dark green, thick and leathery. 1 to 2 inch leaves typically have teeth on the margins.

Flower/Fruit

Inconspicuous white rose flowers occur February to May. These are followed by orange-red fruit with a sugary coating.

Range

Occurs throughout Los Angeles County in the coastal zone and locally in the intermediate foothill areas.

Flammability – Low to moderate.

Maintenance

Due to habits of mounding on itself, it can develop large amounts of dead material. Should be maintained free of dead material and canopy limbed off the ground. Lemonade Berry should be left on site unless selective removal to provide a break in fuel continuity is desirable. This deep rooted plant is valuable in protecting against erosion in coastal areas.



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Monkeyflower

*Diplacus/
Mimulus longiflorus*

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau



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Shape/Size

Shrub 1 to 4 feet tall.

Leaves

Sticky leaves are narrow and 1 to 3 inches long. Yellowish-green on upper side and lighter and hairy on underside.

Flower/Fruit

Light orange to red tubular flowers 2 inches long. Blooms February to August. Fruit is a capsule.

Range

Common on dry rocky slopes up to 5,000 feet primarily in coastal sage scrub and chaparral plant communities.

Flammability – Low.

Maintenance

Recommend pruning to keep vigorous and removal of any dead material.



Mountain Mahogany

Cercocarpus betuloides

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau

Shape/Size

Open evergreen shrub from 6 to 20 feet tall. Occasionally a small tree with smooth bark.

Leaves

3/8 to 1 inch long, prominently veined, upper end toothed, lower end towards stem is smooth. Dark green upper surface, whitish, hairy underside.

Flower/Fruit

Fruit is a noticeable achene with a silky-curling tail 1½ to 3½ inches long.

Range

Chaparral, oak woodland plant communities on dry slopes and washes below 6,000 feet. Increasing prominence at higher elevations in the coastal chaparral communities.

Flammability – Medium.

Produces more dead attached fuels than many other associated plants but has a lower risk of crown fires due to open character of the plant.

Maintenance

Crown sprouts after fire or cutting. Recommend selective removal and or crowning / thinning of canopy off the ground.



Photo by John Aimes



Photo by John Aimes



Mule Fat

Baccharis viminea

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau



Photo by John Aimes



Photo by John Aimes

Shape/Size

Willow-like evergreen shrub
6 to 12 feet tall.

Leaves

Linear leaves 1 to 4 inches
long are light green and shiny
on both sides. Margins are
either smooth or serrated
from the middle to the tip.

Flower/Fruit

Blooms primarily March to
July but flowers can be found
most of the year. Flower
heads are whitish clusters.
Fruit is a small ribbed
achene.

Range

Common shrub of moist
places, particularly stream
banks and dry stream beds.

Flammability – Low, due to
higher fuel moisture content.

Maintenance

Stump sprouts after fire or
cutting. Recommend
removal of dead material.



Poison Oak

Toxicodendron diversilobum

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau

Shape/Size

Erect or spreading deciduous shrub 3 to 9 feet tall.

Leaves

Three leaflets attach to one stem each of which is somewhat oval with rounded serrations or slightly lobed. Bright shiny green upper, paler underneath. Juvenile leaves are red. Mature leaves turn red in late summer and fall.

Flower/Fruit

New leaves appear in the spring. Blooms March through June with small greenish white blossoms in drooping clusters. Fruit is a small whitish berry ¼ inch in diameter.

Range

Very common plant in shaded moist areas. Grows below 5,000 feet in many plant communities.

Flammability – Low.

Maintenance

Due to the allergic skin rash and swelling that this plant causes, very deliberate decisions regarding clearance of this species should be determined. When possible select clearance of other vegetation to mitigate continuous fuels reduction. Avoid contact unless absolutely necessary.



Photo by John Aimes



Photo by John Aimes

Rabbit Brush

Chrysothamnus spp.

Information provided by the Forestry Division, Prevention Bureau



Photo by Tim Knorr



Photo by Tim Knorr

Shape/Size

Shrub from 1 to 7 feet tall.
Round in shape.

Leaves

Gray to whitish. Fibrous
bark, multi-branched stems.

Flower/Fruit

Usually noticed only in late
summer or early fall when
showy yellow flower clusters
are in bloom.

Range

Desert side of the mountains
up to 9,500 feet but usually
below 7,000 feet down to the
desert floor.

Flammability – Moderate.

Small foliage produces
compact leaf litter. Dead
material within plant
contributes to the vertical fuel
ladder.

Maintenance

Stump sprouts after cutting or
fire. Recommended removal
0 to 50 feet from structures.
Thinned 50 to 100 feet.

